

**SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger**

Twitter @rsnbrgr

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Title: BIOGRAPHY OF MAJ. GEN. ORVILLE A. ANDERSON

Date(s): CA. 1 JAN 1951 - 2 FEB 1951

Call: 239.293 (ANDERSON) Volume: N/A

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Maj. Gen. Orvil A. Anderson

Serving as the first Commandant of the War College,  
General Anderson played a very significant role in the formative years of this senior school of the Air University. His thoughts became closely interwoven in the philosophy of that school, particularly as related to the cause of academic freedom.

General Anderson received his commission as a second lieutenant in the Air Service on 3 August 1918. He devoted the early part of his career to experimentation and development in the lighter-than-air field. As navigator and pilot of an army airship on the first transcontinental flight by lighter-than-aircraft, he attracted considerable public attention. Other outstanding accomplishments were the first successful anchoring of an airship at sea in 1933, using a canvas sea anchor which he had designed; and stratosphere test flights culminating in a new altitude record of 72,395 feet on 11 November 1935 as pilot of the balloon "Explorer II."

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During World War II, General Anderson further distinguished himself as Chairman of the Combined Operational Planning Committee, Headquarters, AAF; Deputy Commander for Operations, 8th Air Force; and as Senior Military Advisor of the U. S. Strategic Bombing Survey. He was assigned as Commandant of the Air War College on 15 June 1946.

General Anderson held aeronautical ratings as a Command Pilot, Senior Balloon Pilot, Combat Observer, Balloon Observer, and Aircraft Observer. His decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Hubbard Medal of the National Geographic Society, French Legion of Honor, French Croix de Guerre, British Companion of the Bath, MacKay Trophy, Harmon International Award, and Federation Aeronautique International Prix Henry De Lavaulx.

On 1 September 1950, General Anderson was suspended as Commandant, Air War College, after he had spoken about "preventive war." Although General Hoyt S. Vandenberg gave no reason publically for the suspension, a speech made by him in



Chicago in April 1948 disclosed "the premise that war is inevitable is not only untrue but is most dangerous. We will not lose or lessen our desire for peace. We will work for peace as hard as we can."

General Anderson retired from active duty on 31 December 1950.



May. Gen. Orvil A. Anderson, USAF Ret.

\* Navigator and pilot of <sup>transcontinental</sup> first flight by Army lighter-than-air airship

\* Designer of canvass sea anchor in first successful anchoring of airship at sea

\* Established new altitude record of 72,395 feet in stratosphere on 11 November 1935 as pilot of the balloon "Explorer II"

\* During WWII distinguished himself as Chairman of the Combined Operational Planning Committee, Headquarters AAF; Deputy Commander for Operations, 8th Air Force; and as Senior Military Advisor of the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey

\* First Commandant, Air War College of Air University system

\* Presently serves as Director, Air Force Historical Foundation





